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Madisonville, Tennessee 37354

June 17, 1998 JUN 22 09:58

Lyle D. Jaffe
Dockets Management
FDA/DHHS
12420 Parklawn Drive, Room I-23
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Dear Mr. Jaffe:

I am deeply disturbed by the article in PETA's spring 1999 issue of Animal Times describing forced molting of layer hens. The hens suffer appalling living conditions by being kept overcrowded in small cages; then, to compound their suffering, they are starved and kept in total darkness in order to cause this forced molting. This kind of stress and trauma actually produces unhealthy chickens because they are malnourished and their immune systems are weakened. Furthermore, the author claims this forced molting is a major cause of salmonella found in the eggs--contamination I do not wish to bring home.

These birds are sentient beings--having feelings of stress and pain similar to humans. Their weakened bones break from lack of nutrition and sometimes their beaks are severed to prevent pecking each other--both causing them severe pain. Many die of starvation and rot in the cages. These innocent victims do not deserve to endure horrible living conditions and deaths for the sake of increased production. Peace on earth includes empathy and respect for our animal inhabitants as well as for humans. If we do not learn to respect other life forms, we will have little hope of eliminating humankind's cruelty and destruction of itself.

Please support legislation that bans the practices of factory farming and the forced molting of hens for the increased production of eggs, that is, profits. The natural environment for hens is freedom to flap their wings, to move around and peck for food, to roost and lay eggs comfortably. The overcrowded living conditions only serve to increase the number of diseased hens that end up in chicken soup or companion animal food and to increase the salmonella contamination in eggs. Why should consumers be provided with such deplorable service?

I advocate humane living conditions for chickens to assure their good health, and I wholeheartedly support the petition to ban the forced molting of layer hens, docket 98P-0203/CP, in order to assure good human health.

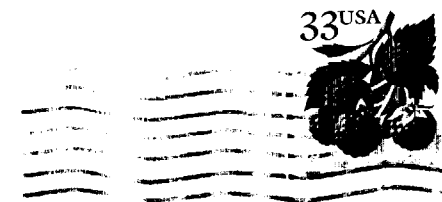
Sincerely,

Sandra Tompkins
Sandra Tompkins

98P-0203

C/655

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